

Highlights: National Southwest Border Counternarcotics Strategy
June 5, 2009

The *National Southwest Border Counternarcotics Strategy* is a key component of our comprehensive national response to the threat along the Southwest border. The strategy complements the Administration's recently announced increases in border security resources; the Department of Homeland Security's operations plan for border related contingencies; our cooperation with Mexico through the Merida Initiative; and our national effort to reduce the demand for illegal drugs at home. The strategy guides actions in the following areas:

Intelligence and Information Sharing

- Enhance coordination of intelligence collection, analysis, and dissemination to all those, at the border and across the country, working drug issues.
- Expand the scope, quality, and timeliness of actionable information and intelligence that is shared with State, local, and tribal partners.
- Improve the coordination of information that is shared with Mexican partners.

At the Ports of Entry

- Employ enhanced technology, resources, and training to support interdiction.
- Work with interagency partners, Mexican counterparts, and the private sector to increase the use of advance information to screen vehicles and cargo.

Between the Ports of Entry

- Increase operational capabilities near U.S. Border Patrol checkpoints.
- Improve the use of biometric identification systems between POEs and enhance information sharing with Federal, State, local, and tribal law enforcement.
- Increase operational coordination among Federal, State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies.

Air and Marine

- Sustain air and maritime detection and monitoring, intercept, tracking, and apprehension operations along the Southwest border.
- Increase cooperation with Mexican counterparts through the exchange of liaison officers and increased information sharing.
- Modernize airborne sensors and other information collection mechanisms.

Investigations and Prosecutions

- Increase the focus of personnel and resources on the Southwest border.
- Enhance intelligence support to U.S. investigations.
- Increase the capacities of prosecutors and other criminal justice components.
- Utilize the Merida Initiative to increase judicial cooperation with Mexico.
- Target corruption on the U.S. side of the border.
- Counter corruption among foreign officials through visa denials and revocations.

Money

- Stem the southbound flow of bulk cash out of the United States and into Mexico.
- Target illicit use of money services businesses and electronic payment devices.
- Employ targeted financial sanctions to disable drug trafficking organizations.
- Enhance cooperation with the Mexican Government's financial intelligence unit.
- Improve statistical measures of effectiveness for countering money laundering.

Weapons

- Improve intelligence and information sharing relating to illegal weapons with Federal, state, local, and tribal partners,
- Increase interdiction of illegal weapons shipments destined for Mexico.
- Enhance cooperation with international partners in weapons investigations.
- Strengthen domestic coordination on weapons investigations.
- Increase the likelihood of successful Federal prosecution of weapons cases.

Technology

- Employ state-of-the-art technology to interdict drugs and other contraband.
- Develop and deploy technologies that improve officer safety.
- Improve sensor, data fusion, and data sharing capabilities.
- Enhance communications and intelligence technologies to facilitate greater information sharing with State and local law enforcement agencies.

Cooperation with Mexico

- Continue to support ongoing bilateral efforts to stem the flow of drugs, money, and weapons across the shared border.
- Through the Merida Initiative, work with Mexico to deploy effective technology at land POEs, airports, and maritime ports, and will utilize existing bilateral mechanisms to oversee implementation of key bilateral projects.

Tunnel Strategy

- Pursue enhanced tunnel detection technology and capabilities.
- Form a centralized group that deals with tunnel related activities and technology.
- Utilize task forces for interagency tunnel operations.
- The Border Tunnel Prevention Act, signed into law in October 2006, provides increased criminal penalties for persons who construct or use a tunnel or subterranean passageway for illegal purposes.
- The Departments of Justice and Homeland Security should examine the efficacy of formally designating a violation of The Border Tunnel Prevention Act as a predicate offense for conducting a Title III wire intercept.